

A Three-stranded Cord.

The power for good in the world of the British Empire is not just what she is to-day in ideals, morals, statesmanship, scholarship, trade, commerce, finance, naval or military prowess, but the sum total of all that she is and has been. Prestige, influence, accumulate like interest on capital invested. Momentum sustains speed. The arm acquires strength and the hand skill by usage. Experience is the best of teachers, the phrase-maker tells us. "We learn to do by doing" is the maxim of the modern schoolmaster. Farming is a product of the teaching of the years. Success, reverse, change—all shed some light on the farm work of 1909. Yesterday's knowledge is applied under the conditions of to-day. In 1866—some 43 years ago—"The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine" set out to record, honestly, the teaching of experience on the farm with a simple motto, "Persevere and Succeed." The skill of the breeder, the feeder, the soil tiller, the dairyman, the orchardist, the gardener, the beekeeper, the home maker, the student, the investigator—all have gone into the make-up of its pages. Everywhere and always it has sought to ally itself with the best, without fear or favor. Identifying itself with the toil and advancement of the farm, it has become in a unique sense a part and parcel of Canadian agriculture and farm life. It has observed the wilderness become a garden and a world granary. It is difficult to put any adequate estimate upon the cumulative value of over 40 years' acquaintance and alliance with the earnest intelligence of the farms of a country like Canada. But enough to say that the readers and the advertisers of the present week benefit by the gathering interest and influence of all the re-interpreted capital knowledge of the past. Seeking to live to its name and motto, and standing for quality, the paper did not misjudge its constituency, and has been heartened by a steady and ever-widening circle of prospering readers. From monthly to semi-monthly, and from semi-monthly to weekly, "The Farmer's Advocate" has been a growth of years from strength to strength. In some measure it has been its privilege to share in the enhancement of the discriminating, purchasing power of the farms and farm homes of the great Dominion, a fact which the advertiser who aims to cater to the best is not slow to discern. And thus reader, advertiser and those who build the paper are mutually advantaged in a trinity of 43 years' accumulating influence and trust. These be the days of co-operation, but there is no co-operation like the co-operation of intelligence.

A Glimpse of Country Life in Britain.

Riding north from Liverpool in June over the Midland Railway, with the panorama of hill and valley, river and forest unfolding mile by mile and ever changing as we sped along, a feeling of intense satisfaction, almost of relief, came over me at the view of it, for there is a restfulness in the fields of England, almost indescribable, and yet felt and appreciated, perhaps even by those not born to a love of the country. A thought of the work of the Country-life Commission sprang to my mind, not so much in reference to the preservation of our natural resources, but rather as touching the amelioration of rural conditions, for the reason that British agriculture challenges study and yields food for thought to all those interested in the economics of farm life in either a physical or ethical sense. And the superficial view is borne out by more intimate knowledge. True, we may hesitate somewhat at the system of land tenure, and our Canadian independence may be somewhat startled at the distinction of class relationship as it exists between master and man and between landlord and tenant, but there is a comfort in the country here that we have yet to know in Canada. And it is a comfort not of indolence or ignorance, but of a large degree of prosperity and of social and physical well-being.

The land is tilled and farmed as perhaps nowhere else in the world, the resources of the ground are husbanded and stimulated in a masterly way, the flocks and herds know of no better management in any country, and the business operations are conducted in as shrewd a fashion as to make bargaining almost a science. This latter is, perhaps, particularly true in the north country. There are, indeed, neglected farms, but such pass sooner or later out of the hands of incapable occupants, for rents must be made up, and shiftless management speedily loses ground before the continuous competition that exists for the best holdings. Such men, of necessity, must

either give over farming for themselves or move into more backward districts or on to poorer land. Even here competition does not cease, and far up the hillsides, hedges or stone dykes enclose the last foot of soil that will yield at best a grudging return, and under such conditions many a good living is made, even though it be a hard one. The thrift of an upland farm is proverbial.

The landlords are, I think, on the whole, just, and in many cases very considerate, but a shiftless tenant in the end finds his lot a hard one. He does not retain long the respect even of his neighbors, and he soon passes out of the system, and, as I said, must needs find his level elsewhere. Rents, while varying, of course, with the quality of the land, are moderately uniform throughout a countryside, and as holdings, to some extent, at least, are always in the market at the termination of a lease, they are never uniformly low. The lease is frequently for five years, and a pound an acre is, perhaps, an average rent. On the best land, however, it will run up to thirty and forty



A Home in the Border Country, near Gretna Green.

shillings an acre, while in poorer districts it may run down to ten. The cost of rent, labor, manures and feed on the larger and better holdings sometimes amounts to a very large sum. Much more I should say is expended on an acre of land each year as invested capital than in Canada, and the returns are consequently and proportionately greater. The demand then on the farmer continues from year to year, and the intelligence and insight required and exhibited has left its mark indelibly stamped both upon the people and the land.

Further, they have learned how to work. As boys they grow up with a knowledge of the stockmen's art. I remember two lads in Ayrshire, and neither of them could have been more than twelve years old, and yet they led their charges out of their boxes with all the pride and skill and care that would have done credit to veterans of sixty years. A beast in the show-ring is not to be despised because a youngster of eight years has hold of the halter. At one of the dairy farms an old lady of seventy, the wife of the master himself, goes out morning and evening to the byre and milks her cows with the rest, and only regrets the day when age makes her less able to follow her usual custom. And work has not hardened her spirit, for her husband courts her now even as in their youth. Of her daughter, too, I should speak. Few men know better how to work. Her hands and arms are as hard and strong as her father's. For milking she clothed herself as any Ayrshire maid, in clogs, short skirts, apron and homely dress, and the hired men could not keep pace with her down the long line of cows. When it was over, as we all pre-

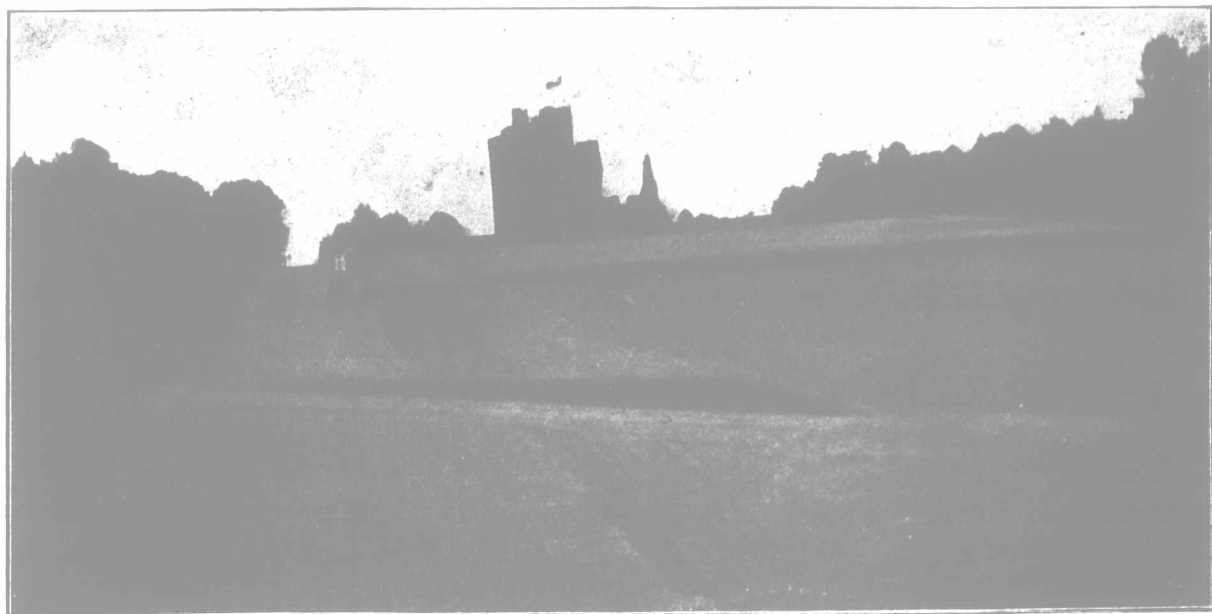
pared for a drive to the hills, she appeared in a few short minutes in comely maiden's garb and with the charm of health and pride of accomplishment upon her as might awaken the envy of many of her more gently-bred sisters. But her father had a character of his own. He started in his youth as a hired plowman, without capital, and now through industry, able management and hard work, he has gathered many farms into his own and his children's hands.

Let me give one further instance. It was in the south where I saw a young lad of not more than twenty or twenty-one in charge of all the men on his father's farm, which consisted of something like 2,200 acres. He was altogether unassuming, and his way was very quiet, but after counsel with his father in the morning he fixed his plan of work for the day, and it became his business to carry it through. The men liked him, and I was impressed with his successful control of all the farm operations. More I might say of the masters themselves, but not now. What they have done and what they are remains as a tribute to the country that bred and reared them.

Besides the labor that bespeaks accomplishment, perhaps every stranger and visitor remarks that the country people of Britain find time for leisure and recreation. Perhaps it is that the growing season is longer, and the work, therefore, not so crowded; it may be that there are more hands to do the same work; but whatever the reason, the consciences of people do not seem to be always so troubled as they are in America; there is more of a finished appearance about the fields, lanes and buildings, and time is forthcoming now and again for a holiday. I don't know how they do it, but while the hurry of getting through is less often upon them, the work of the fields usually appears to be well forward, the odds and ends well in hand, and they find spare time very occasionally for recreation and pleasure, and through this there has become interwoven a wholesome content into the life of the country that is as tonic in its effect as the air of the seaside. The workmen have fixed hours as a rule, and the long evenings give them opportunity to become their own masters for a time of the day at least. The farmers regularly attend market once a week, and as thoroughly enjoy their half-holiday as their sons do their occasional evening or afternoon games of cricket or football. The farmers' wives take much satisfaction out of their flower gardens, and their daughters out of their cycling parties and tennis. An English lawn, with its flowers and its grass, is always a delight to the eye. Then, again, the tenant has usually the right of ground game, and I remember a morning in Gloucestershire when we were up before five o'clock and went out rabbiting, and had as much keen enjoyment for an hour or two as could well be wished. In all such ways is made possible the gathering together of the people of the country districts and their association in common interests, and thus there grows up the society of country life.

For the most part the workmen are comfortable. They have their homes either near to each other on the farms or else in villages close by. The cottages are built by the landlord of the estate, and the farm hands occupy them as part of the compensation for their labor. The tenant of the farm, in having the comfort of his hired help thus provided for, finds it no hardship to make return in his rent against the cost and upkeep of these cottages. The houses are small but substantial, and as the working class are content with rather few luxuries and live simply, there is much happiness amongst them.

They work cheaply—two shillings, two shillings and sixpence and three shillings a day are average wages. Sometimes work is allotted by the piece, and then from three to four shillings may



Ruins of an Old Castle in a Nobleman's Lawn, County of Wigton, Scotland.